

MINUTES OF THE  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

March 27, 2008

Maricopa Association of Governments Office  
302 North First Avenue, Suite 200, Saguaro Room  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Phoenix: Tom Callow	Maricopa County: John Hauskins
ADOT: Floyd Roehrich	Mesa: Scott Butler
Avondale: David Fitzhugh	Paradise Valley: Robert M. Cicarelli
Buckeye: Scott Lowe	Peoria: Dan Nissen for David Moody
Chandler: Patrice Kraus	*Queen Creek: Mark Young
El Mirage: Lance Calvert	RPTA: Bryan Jungwirth
Fountain Hills: Randy Harrel	Scottsdale: Dave Meinhart for
*Gila Bend: Lynn Farmer	Mary O'Connor
*Gila River: David White	Surprise: Stephanie Wilson for
Gilbert: Tami Ryall	Randy Overmyer
Glendale: Terry Johnson	Tempe: Carlos De Leon
*Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	Valley Metro Rail: John Farry
*Guadalupe: Jim Ricker	Youngtown: Lloyce Robinson
Litchfield Park: Mike Cartsonis	

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING

*Regional Bicycle Task Force: Randi Alcott, RPTA	*Pedestrian Working Group: Eric Iwersen, City of Tempe
*Street Committee: Darryl Crossman, City of Litchfield Park	*ITS Committee: Alan Sanderson

\* Members neither present nor represented by proxy.    + - Attended by Videoconference  
# - Attended by Audioconference

OTHERS PRESENT

Eric Anderson, MAG	Jay Smyth, SWRC Coalition
Roger Herzog, MAG	Bill Leister, CAAG
Ken Hall, MAG	Nicole Gonzalez-Valentino, GPCC
Steve Tate, MAG	Kammy Horne, URS
Eileen Yazzie, MAG	Thomas Dennis, ASU School of Planning
Kevin Wallace, MAG	Ronnie Stricklin, McDOT
Sarath Joshua, MAG	Greg Montes, City of Glendale
Nathan Pryor, MAG	Brent Stoddard, Mesa
Wulf Grote, METRO	Janna Day, Fenemore Craig
Stuart Boggs, RPTA	Kellee Kelly, City of Maricopa
Dawn Coomer, City of Tempe	Rakesh Tripathi, ADOT
	Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Tom Callow called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Approval of February 28, 2008 Draft Minutes

Addressing the first order of business, Mr. Callow asked if there were any changes or amendments to the meeting minutes. Mr. John Hauskins then moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Dave Meinhart seconded, and the minutes were subsequently approved by unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

3. Call to the Audience

Mr. Callow stated that he had not received any request to speak cards from the audience, and moved on to the next item on the agenda.

4. Transportation Director's Report

Mr. Callow introduced Mr. Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Planning Director, to provide the Transportation Director's report. Mr. Anderson introduced Mr. Rakesh Tripathi, who was seated in the audience. Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that Mr. Tripathi came to Arizona from the Houston Office of the Texas Department of Transportation, and is the newly appointed Transportation Planning Director for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). He welcomed Mr. Tripathi to the meeting, and stated that he was looking forward to working with him in the future.

Mr. Anderson then reported on the Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) revenues. He informed those in attendance that the February RARF revenues have decreased by approximately 7.0 percent from February 2007, and that total collections were down by a total of "negative" 1.2 percent from last year. Mr. Anderson also noted that the total revenues through February of 2008 were approximately 4.5 percent lower than forecasted. Mr. Anderson addressed the effects of lower revenues and rising costs on the MAG Freeway Program, and also addressed the declining housing market. Mr. Anderson said that traditionally, the Phoenix housing market has a tendency to come out of an economic downturn sooner than other regional and state housing markets throughout the country. He said that based upon national economic discourse and trends, he does not expect the onset of an economic recovery until 2009 at the earliest.

Mr. Anderson then informed the Committee that MAG has traditionally completed a 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and an annual update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). However, he said that this year MAG will not complete a TIP through Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, and will not be updating the RTP. Mr. Anderson stated that the Energy Independence and Security Act (signed in December 2007) called for the establishment of an 80 percent minimum match requirement for federal funds, and if this was adhered to, MAG would need an additional \$33.0 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) to fund the currently programmed CMAQ projects. Mr. Anderson said that

many other Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) throughout the United States are also experiencing issues associated with the legislation. Mr. Anderson informed those in attendance that due to the \$33.0 million programming issue, MAG is working on potential strategies to address this issue. He informed the Committee that in lieu of the TIP, MAG will amend the 2008-2012 TIP for FY 2009 and 2010 transportation projects. Mr. Anderson noted that a draft of the project listings in the amendment will be forwarded to the TRC in April, and then on to the MAG Management Committee in June. Mr. Anderson then addressed the programming of ITS, bike and pedestrian projects that are currently programmed through FY 2013. He stated that these particular projects that are programmed past FY 2010 will go into a holding pattern for the next year, and will then be added back into the FY 2010-2014 TIP when it is produced next year.

Mr. Anderson then informed the Committee that the consulting firm of PBS & J is currently working the creation of regional congestion performance measures for the MAG Region, and will be updating the MAG Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) process. Mr. Anderson then answered a number of questions from members in attendance, and concluded his report to the Committee.

#### 5. ADOT Red Letter Process

Mr. Callow introduced Mr. Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Planning Director, to provide information on the ADOT Red Letter process. Mr. Anderson called the Committee's attention to Attachment One of the TRC Agenda Packet, which provided an overview of "Red Letter" notices received by ADOT from July 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007. Mr. Anderson stated that the purpose of the Red Letter process was intended for MAG member entities to notify ADOT of any potential development activities within freeway alignments, which include actions on plans, zoning issues and permits. Mr. Anderson said that this item was an informational item, and that a formal motion was not required. There were no questions, and this concluded Mr. Anderson's report.

#### 6. ADOT Requested Change to STAN Process

Mr. Callow introduced Mr. Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Planning Director, to provide information on ADOT's request to make a change to the State Transportation Acceleration Needs (STAN) account. Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that ADOT has recently requested to decrease funding for the *I-10: Sarival Road to Verrado Way* project by \$1.0 million, and to increase funding on the *Loop 303: Bell Road Crossing* and *Loop 303: Cactus and Waddell Road Crossing* projects by \$500,000 each. Mr. Anderson stated that ADOT determined that an additional \$1.0 million was not needed to complete the I-10 project, and determined that the money is needed on the Loop 303 projects. Mr. Anderson stated that this request by ADOT would not impact the MAG Freeway Program, and recommended it's approval.

Mr. John Hauskins moved to recommend approval of the requested change by ADOT to the STAN process, to decrease funding for the *I-10: Sarival Road to Verrado Way* project by \$1.0 million, and to increase funding on the *Loop 303: Bell Road Crossing* and *Loop 303: Cactus*

and Waddell Road Crossing projects by \$500,000 each. Mr. Lance Calvert seconded, and the motion was subsequently approved by unanimous voice vote of the Committee. There were no questions, and this concluded Mr. Anderson's report.

7. Interim Closeout of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008 MAG Federally Funded Program

Addressing the next order of business, Mr. Callow introduced Ms. Eileen Yazzie, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, to provide an update on the Interim Closeout of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008 MAG Federally Funded Program. Ms. Yazzie addressed the Committee, and called their attention to the Memorandum located in Attachment Two of the TRC Agenda Packet. Ms. Yazzie informed the Committee that since the time of the TRC Agenda Packet mailing, ADOT has provided MAG with updated figures.

Ms. Yazzie stated that there was a total of \$137.0 million in available Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) - MAG funding, and that there was a total amount of \$141.0 million in actual programmed projects for FFY 2008. Ms. Yazzie informed those in attendance that MAG anticipates \$91.0 million in project money that will obligate during FFY 2008, and that there will be a total of approximately \$46.0 million in unobligated funding. Ms. Yazzie then addressed the Deferral Notification process, and informed the Committee that in the past, MAG has relied on receiving letters from MAG member agencies that were planning to defer certain projects. Ms. Yazzie said that from this point on, MAG has created a form that is located on the MAG website and is available in both PDF and Word format, which requires a member agency to directly submit deferral information to MAG by no later than April 18, 2008. She noted that the MAG *Deferral Notification Form* must be submitted by either a member of the TRC, MAG Management Committee, or the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. Ms. Yazzie also explained that similar to the deferral notification process, there is also a form that member agencies must fill out in order to submit projects to MAG for consideration of MAG closeout funding.

Ms. Yazzie then provided an overview of current guidelines and principles concerning cost increases, projects to be carried forward, close out priorities, project readiness, commitment to projects, and the commitment to spending CMAQ funds. She noted that MAG was in the process of changing the current guidelines and principles. Discussion followed concerning the advancement of current projects ready to be obligated, and the possibility of adding additional projects. Mr. Eric Anderson addressed the Committee, and stated that MAG staff intends to be "conservative" this year, and if possible, would like to refrain from adding additional projects for closeout. He stated that this is primarily due to currently being over programmed, and also noted that there is considerable uncertainty in funding at the Federal level concerning the Highway Trust Fund. Mr. Anderson said that it may be necessary to wait for a new Federal Transportation Reauthorization Act in 2009 before "reassessing" the inclusion of additional projects for the consideration of funding.

Discussion followed, and Ms. Yazzie then stated that there were three ideas in the Draft Principles for which she was seeking Committee comments and input. Ms. Yazzie stated that the Draft Principles that were under consideration included the following: that closeout funds would be categorized into ITS Arterial, Bike and Pedestrian, Air Quality, Freeways, and Light Rail Transit as currently identified and structured in the MAG RTP; that projects should

automatically be deleted from consideration if they had been deferred a total of two or more times; and that “new” projects should possibly be excluded from consideration. Mr. Yazzie then asked for Committee input. After considerable discussion, and listening to the options, the Committee agreed that MAG Staff should refine the Draft Principles, and bring them back for consideration at the next TRC meeting during April of 2008. There was no further discussion, and this concluded Ms. Yazzie’s report.

8. Project Changes - Amendments, and Administrative Modifications to the FY 2008-2012 MAG Transportation Improvement Program

Addressing the next order of business, Mr. Callow introduced Ms. Eileen Yazzie, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, to provide an overview of project changes, amendments and modifications to the FY 2008-2012 MAG TIP. Ms. Yazzie addressed the Committee, and called their attention to the Project Change Sheet, located in Attachment Three of the TRC Agenda Packet. Ms. Yazzie stated that the two Tempe projects listed on the sheet are being combined into one project as part of an administrative modification, which was approved at the last MAG Bike and Pedestrian Committee meeting. Ms. Yazzie also noted minor amendments to a total of six Valley Metro Transportation Enhancement projects; an administrative modification to an ADOT TI project located at I-17 and Dove Valley Road; an administrative modification in the amount of \$1.6 million to a regionwide project; and an amendment to create a new noise mitigation study in the amount of \$65,000.

Discussion followed, and Ms. Yazzie answered a number of questions from members of the Committee. Mr. Bryan Jungwirth then moved to recommend approval of the project changes, amendments, and administrative modifications to the FY 2008-2012 MAG TIP. Mr. Dave Meinhart seconded, and the motion was subsequently approved by unanimous voice vote of the Committee. There were no further questions, and this concluded Ms. Yazzie’s report.

9. Commuter Rail Strategic Plan

Addressing the next order of business, Mr. Callow introduced Mr. Kevin Wallace, MAG Transit Program Manager, to provide an overview of the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan. Mr. Wallace addressed the Committee, and stated that the requested actions for the Agenda item include recommending the acceptance of the Commuter Rail Strategic Plan to the MAG Management Committee, and recommending that MAG proceed with a commuter rail corridor development plan for the BNSF Railway/Grand Avenue Corridor. Mr. Wallace said that the purpose of the Commuter Rail Strategic Plan was to develop as an implementation strategy for commuter rail service in Maricopa County, and in northern Pinal County.

Mr. Wallace then addressed the project area, which had a northwest to southeast range of over 100 miles. He stated that the study was divided into a total of five subareas. Mr. Wallace then addressed the project implementation process, and informed the Committee that as part of the public involvement component, a total of four stakeholder group meetings were held at various locations. The public component of the study also included a series of briefings, which were followed by a public meeting on March 6, 2008, to receive comments on the draft strategic plan. Mr. Wallace addressed the study implementation framework, which consisted of a Concept

System Plan, implementation requirements, and a total of 12 implementation steps.

Mr. Wallace informed those in attendance that the concept system plan specifically utilized existing freight lines throughout the study area, and also included alignments in developing areas as well. Mr. Wallace noted that when assessing the study's implementation requirements, a primary focus was placed upon governance and administration, the cooperation of the railroads, and future funding and finance issues. When assessing how the system would be funded, the study conducted a peer system comparison with other providers in Salt Lake City, Albuquerque, Minneapolis, Denver and Portland. Three commuter rail implementation scenarios were developed using examples from these commuter rail systems, which included a "get started scenario," a "starter system scenario," and a "regional system scenario."

Mr. Wallace then provided an overview of the 12 implementation steps, which included ongoing coordination; Union Pacific passenger rail coordination and planning; Burlington Northern/Santa Fe passenger rail coordination and planning; regional transit planning; future corridor development plans; identifying funding source commitment; developing a governance plan; developing partnerships with railroads; working to pass enabling legislation; developing a seamless transit system; achieving regional sustainability goals; and identifying and preserving future options. Mr. Wallace then addressed an implementation step schedule to 2015, and addressed the next steps in the planning process, which involves the incorporation of additional comments, and ultimately finalizing the strategic plan. He addressed the MAG Committee review process, and the importance of moving forward in with each of the 12 implementation steps. Mr. Wallace once again summarized the requested action of recommending the acceptance of the Commuter Rail Strategic Plan to the MAG Management Committee, and that MAG ultimately proceed with a commuter rail corridor development plan for the BNSF Railway/Grand Avenue Corridor.

Mr. Eric Anderson then addressed the Committee, and stated that BNSF has a lot of plans in the Grand Avenue Corridor, and they are planning to make improvements and are open to preserving the corridor for passenger rail. Mr. Anderson stated that ADOT has been working with the UP to address passenger rail service between Phoenix and Tucson. Discussion followed, and Mr. John Hauskins moved to recommend approval of the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan. Mr. Lance Calvert seconded the motion. Discussion followed, and Mr. Carlos DeLeon addressed the Committee, and called their attention to Page 9 of the plan. Mr. DeLeon stated that MAG should realistically be looking at the implementation of all 12 steps, but should immediately look to implement items one through four. Chairman Tom Callow asked for a vote to amend the motion, and Ms. Lloyce Robinson stated that BNSF is assertive with regard to their plans in the area, and that MAG should only recommend the approval of the plan as presented, and should not consider the implementation of any implementation steps at this time.

Mr. John Hauskins then moved to approve the MAG Commuter Rail Strategic Plan, with the goal of moving forward with the implementation of steps one through four. Mr. Calvert seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 21 ayes to one naye, with Ms. Lloyce Robinson going on record as being opposed to the vote. There were no further questions, and this concluded Mr. Wallace's report.

10. Member Agency Update

Mr. Callow asked members of the Committee whether they would like to provide updates; address any issues or areas of concern regarding transportation at the regional level; and asked whether any members in attendance would like to address recent information that was relevant to transportation within their respective communities. There were no member comments at this time.

11. Next Meeting Date

Mr. Callow informed members in attendance that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on April 24, 2008. There being no further business, Mr. Callow adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.